



# MARY KAY O'CONNOR PROCESS SAFETY CENTER

TEXAS A&M ENGINEERING EXPERIMENT STATION

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## **The Gulf Research Program's Initiative on Safer Offshore Energy Systems**

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### **Abstract**

The Gulf Research Program (GRP) is a division of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine established in 2013 as part of settlements in the criminal cases with the companies involved in the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* disaster. Settlement funds totaling \$500 million were designated toward a 30-year endowment to support grants, fellowships and other activities in three areas of responsibility: oil system safety, human health & well-being, and environmental resources.

In the initial years of the program, several initiatives were developed to focus the GRP's work and resources, one of which is the Safer Offshore Energy Systems Initiative. This initiative aims to foster minimization and management of risk to make offshore operations safer for both people and the environment in order to prevent oil spills, loss of life, and harmful exposures related to offshore operations.

Comprehensive risk awareness can help both industry and regulators to better anticipate, reduce, and avoid risks in the offshore energy environment. Through grants, workshops, studies, and other activities, the GRP aims to advance this understanding by supporting the following:

- Fundamental research needs in earth science, engineering and technology, and human and behavioral science that could promote safer offshore operations.
- Educational or training programs designed to promote a skilled and safety-oriented workforce, and
- Collaboration among researchers, industry, and regulatory agencies to advance understanding and communication about systemic risk in the offshore environment